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LETTER DATED 3 OCTOBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to write to you pursuant to my previous letter dated 23 September 1996 (S/1996/774) regarding the recent infiltration into the Republic of Korea by armed commandos from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a military submarine.

I would first like to provide you with an update on the situation. In the time since my last letter, two more North Korean commandos have been killed in an exchange of fire with the Republic of Korea Army, which, including the 11 found dead, executed by their own cohorts, brings the total number of North Korean deaths to 22. In addition to the one commando captured alive, we assume that three North Korean commandos remain at large. In the course of the firefights, nine lives have been lost on our side, including one civilian, and 22 Republic of Korea Army soldiers have been wounded. A large-scale search operation continues for the remaining intruders.

On various occasions, including at the newly convened General Assembly meeting, North Korea has continued to allege that the submarine, while on a routine training mission, experienced engine trouble and ran aground after drifting in the East Sea. They persist in this claim despite the abundance of concrete evidence and technical findings that clearly prove that this is nothing but pure fabrication. Moreover, North Korea not only denounces the Republic of Korea for attacking their allegedly unarmed soldiers, but absurdly claims that, as victims, they have the right to retaliate against us.

As I made clear at the consultations held by members of the Security Council on 20 and 24 September, as well as through the aforementioned letter, we believe it is now incumbent upon the Government of the Republic of Korea to bring this issue before the Council. For this reason, my Government strongly believes that appropriate action by the Council on the issue is now in order.

Most importantly, I wish to reiterate that my Government is extremely concerned that this incident reflects a clear pattern of military provocations by North Korea against the Republic of Korea, and forms part of a larger scheme

not only to dismantle the Korean Armistice Agreement but also to destabilize the Republic of Korea.

It is therefore important for the international community to send a clear and strong signal to North Korea that further provocations on its part will not be tolerated.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) PARK Soo Gil
Permanent Representative